

**LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND PLANNING COMMISSION
SPECIAL WORKSHOP MEETING**

November 27, 2001

PRESENT

William Hawk
William Seeds
William Hornung
Jay Purdy
Gary Crissman

W. Roy Newsome
Henry Adams
Ernest Gingrich
Fred Lighty
Dennis Guise
Henry Adams

ALSO PRESENT

Lori Wissler, Lower Paxton Township
Joseph Sutor, Lower Paxton Township
Jeff Staub, Dauphin Engineering
James Snyder, Herbert, Rowland, Grubic
Larry Troutman, Developer

Call to Order

Chairman William Hawk called the November 27, 2001 special workshop meeting of the Lower Paxton Township Planning Commission to order at 6:10 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Hawk led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Final subdivision Plan for Forest Hills, Phase IV

Chairman Hawk explained that the purpose for this meeting was to hear concerns regarding the final subdivision plan for Forest Hills, Phase IV, and issues regarding the connection of Continental Drive. He stated that the Committee would allow one hour for the meeting as the Committee has a Comprehensive Planning Advisory Board meeting scheduled for 7 p.m.

Chairman Hawk noted that although the preliminary plan had been approved showing the connection of Continental Drive, this does not preclude the Board from revisiting the plan.

Mr. Larry Troutman, developer, made the following comments to the Committee. He noted that three years ago the plan was approved with the Continental Drive connection. He stated that he did provide an alternative option, at that time, with the "missing link". He explained that the vision was that this phase would be addressed in the year 2006, but the project has moved along much faster than anticipated. He noted that Phase V would encompass the Continental Drive connection aspect of the project.

Mr. Troutman noted that he, along with Micki Molinari, and Barbara Greenburg would prefer that Continental Drive be connected, as it was presented in the original plan. He noted that they, along with another developer, have contributed funds toward traffic calming for the connection of Continental Drive. The Township is holding these funds to address, design and implement, any traffic calming that would be deemed appropriate and necessary on Continental Drive. He noted that this project would impact part of the Comprehensive Plan as a collector street. It would also impact the secondary streets to help carry the load from these streets.

Mr. Jeff Staub, Dauphin Engineering, explained that the plan was preliminarily approved in 1999, with three phases already completed. He explained that several exhibits were prepared for this meeting, one, a large aerial display of the area, showing the connector road. The second exhibit, a phasing plan, shows Phase IV, which would include construction of 20 lots. This final plan is pending review before the December Planning Commission meeting. He noted the third exhibit was a detail drawing displaying the connector road, with traffic calming devices. He stated that these traffic calming devices were designed as a result of a series of meetings with Township in 1999.

Mr. Staub noted that the preliminary plan also showed a variation of Continental Drive with the "missing link". He noted that the "missing link" is from Forest Hills and Centennial Acres.

A resident noted that in 1998, the engineers developed numerous plans that were deemed by the Supervisors as unsafe. He questioned if additional ideas had since been developed, and what was different from that plan. He questioned if the Board of Supervisors had approved this plan in 1998.

Mr. Staub answered that the current traffic calming plans for Continental Drive are the result of numerous proposals made to Township Staff, Engineer and the Board of Supervisors. It is a compromise plan featuring speed table at the intersection of Forest Lane and Continental Drive, concrete traffic separators at Abbey Lane and Continental Drive, and several sections of Boulevard type cross sections throughout the extent of the street. A small traffic circle was designed for Tournament Way and Continental Drive. The Board of Supervisors approved this traffic-calming plan, and the money contributed toward the traffic calming expense, was based on this design. This is the plan that would be presented to the Planning Commission in December.

A resident questioned when the Board of Supervisors had approved the plan. Mr. Staub answered in 1999.

A resident questioned if there was a possibility that the roadway would not be built. Mr. Staub noted that the preliminary plan was approved in 1999 for the Estates of Forest Hills, showing two versions of Continental Drive. One plan showed the road connecting, and the other plan did not have the connecting road.

A resident questioned how far the traffic-calming devices were from the intersection near the park. Mr. Staub estimated that it would be between 300 to 400 feet. Mr. Staub noted that the boulevard cross section was put near the west end of Centennial Acres to slow the traffic.

Mr. Randall Holmes, of Continental Drive, questioned Mr. Staub regarding his professional opinion regarding the success of the traffic calming devices that have already been installed on Abbey, Forest, and Wimbledon, with respect to what the anticipated result was to be. Mr. Staub noted that he was not a traffic engineer, but explained that the people on Wimbledon Drive have been pleased with the results. Mr. Joseph Sutor stated that the studies conducted by the Township, showed that the speeds have decreased by 3 to 4 miles an hour.

Mr. Holmes questioned if there were any other aesthetics results, other than a 3 to 4 mile per hour reduction in speed. Mr. Purdy commented that the peak speeds have dropped significantly because it was not wise to drive a car over the speed humps at a high rate of speed.

Mr. Holmes stated that Forest Hills and Forest Hills Estates were the guinea pigs for calming devices. Mr. Purdy noted that traffic-calming devices are being used on Catherine Street in the Township as well.

A resident of Wimbledon Drive stated that she is not as concerned with aesthetics, but with safety. She noted the reduction of traffic speeds, but explained that the devices do not help with the problem of people running stop signs. Mr. Purdy stated that other residents of Wimbledon Drive have told him the same thing.

A resident of Wimbledon Drive stated that he mirrored the same concern regarding safety. He also noted that people fail to stop at the stop signs, but he agreed that the speed humps have slowed down the traffic.

A resident of Forest Lane again mirrored the praise of the speed humps, noting that young drivers with low riding cars have slowed their cars down, but again stop sign violations are a constant concern.

Mr. Hawk thanked all the participants for their comments, but he asked that anyone making a comment to please give their name and address for the record.

Glen Haffer of Continental Drive questioned if driveways would exit onto the proposed connector road, and if the money held in escrow is only for the proposed connector road. Mr. Staub answered that the proposed Continental Drive does not permit residential driveways to exit onto that road for safety reasons. Mr. Haffer noted that Continental Drive in Forest Hills does permit driveways to exit onto Continental Road. Mr. Staub stated that the ordinance did not have the prohibition at the time the phases for Forest Hills were approved. Mr. Staub noted that the funds held in escrow by the Township are for traffic calming devices for the connector road only.

Mr. Ted Knouse of Continental Drive noted that Continental Drive was designed as a collector road with no driveways permitted to exit onto it. However, the same vehicles traveling at higher rates of speed do not slow down in the Forest Hills area where there are driveways that exit onto Continental Drive. He suggested that the idea of Continental Drive becoming a connector road must have been abandoned at the time the Forest Hills development was designed and approved. He feels strongly that the connection should not be made for that reason.

Ms. Joan Shilling of Abbey Lane noted the concern of the people from Forest Hills, but she noted that the traffic calming devices have slowed the traffic. She stated that the connector road would also direct traffic from Forest Hills into her development also. It is not a situation that only impacts Centennial Acres.

Ms. Chris Potami of Abbey Lane stated that Abbey Lane is a feeder road from the mountain. She noted that houses were not built at the end of Continental Drive and that should have keyed residents that future road access would occur in the future. Ms. Potami questioned if it wasn't a given that the connection would be made in the future.

Mr. Staub noted that there was an understanding that Continental Drive would be connected in the future, to include connections to Progress Avenue in Susquehanna Township and West Hanover Township. Mr. Seeds noted that it was part of the Comprehensive Plan of 1992, and realtors should have informed the residents of that fact.

Ms. Hutchins suggested that it would be better to plan a curved road, which would slow down the speeds of the traffic naturally; straight roads invite higher speeds. She suggested that the engineers try to design a better connector road, possibly using the new PENNDOT standards concerning traffic calming.

Mr. Staub commented that there were numerous designs for the connector road to include curves and other designs, but that none of them worked, due to Continental Drive being named a collector road. He noted there are collector road standards that must be met. Collector roads are designed to efficiently move traffic.

Mr. Randy Stout of Centennial Acres, Woodrow Avenue, stated that he lives across the street from the park. He stated that he was unaware that Continental Drive was to be connected as a collector road, and his major fear is the safety of his children and the children that use the park. He noted that if the road was connected, he would probably move.

Mr. Howard Langan of Continental Drive, also stated that although he feels sorry for the people on Abbey Lane, he notes that when the road is fully connected, the road will be impacted with the traffic from Giant and all the homes in Susquehanna Township. He noted that the traffic jams that occur on Linglestown Road would lead drivers to use Continental Drive as a short cut to eliminate the traffic problems. He stated that he is against Continental Drive being connected on his side as well as the side in Susquehanna Township.

Mr. Anastasius Peter of Continental Drive noted that he purposely chose to live on Continental Drive due to the quiet nature of the neighborhood and street. He stated that his road would become a raceway for traffic trying to avoid Linglestown Road, and he noted that he would also move if the connection is made.

Mr. Hawk noted that the Phase IV Plan would be presented to the Planning Commission on December 12, 2001. The Phase IV Plan would then be presented to the Board of Supervisors at the January 15, 2001 meeting.

Mr. Hawk thanked all those who came to the meeting and invited residents to attend the meetings listed, to again voice their opinion. He suggested that it might be feasible to have a spokesperson present the idea to both of the above boards at the listed dates.

Mr. Holmes requested for Mr. Hawk to schedule another meeting for residents to voice their opinion. He suggested that it would enable the residents to voice their opinion without the restraints created by the Planning Committee and the Board of Supervisors meetings. He noted some residents are more concerned about the future connection to Susquehanna Township than the Forest Hills Development connection. He stated that he would check with Mr. Wolfe to see if a meeting could be scheduled. He expressed his gratitude to the Supervisors for listening to the residents and to the developers for planning nice communities.

Mr. Purdy noted that he would not be a part of the decision, but he stated that the Board had the option to schedule this meeting just to hear the input from the residents. He noted that the developers involved in this project are very honorable and reliable.

Mr. Hawk adjourned the meeting at 6:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Heberle
Recording Secretary